



3timbers CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2022

ISSUE 7

*Connecting
people to the
transforming &
redeeming love
of Jesus Christ
through*

*PASSION,
POWER,
and
PRESENCE*

~~~~~

**WORSHIP WITH US!**

**SUNDAY 10 A.M.**

**In the Upper Room at  
NATE'S STUMBLE INN**

**15409 S 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET  
BENNINGTON, NE**

**OR**

**FACEBOOK**

**SEARCH FOR**

**THREE TIMBERS CHURCH  
THEN 'VIDEOS'**



## *God's Glorious Unfolding 2022 Vision - Equip & Engage*

On January 1, 2015, God began a Glorious Unfolding of His amazing grace and provision through Three Timbers Church and hasn't stopped since. As we begin this new year, I am reminded of all the ways in which God has provided, guided and protected His church. When we didn't have a place to worship during the pandemic, God provided the Stumble Inn bar. When our former office was sold and we didn't have a place to do local ministry and have our staff work out of, God provided the Ministry Center. When we needed to find a new worship pastor and youth pastor, God provided two amazing people in Grant and Britney. God has always been and will always be faithful!

This year God has called us to be "Equipped and to Engage" in the ministry of discipleship as Paul wrote about in Ephesians 4:

***<sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*** - Ephesians 4:11-13

That means we need to go deeper in understanding and applying God's Word to our lives so that we can fulfill the Great Commission Jesus talks about in *Matthew 28:19-20* which is about discipleship. To be a disciple of Jesus is about surrendering your will to Him, allowing God's grace to cover you and lead you in life as you look to glorify Him. We glorify God when we become equipped with His truth, that Jesus died for our sins, and that we have hope in a world filled with hopelessness. Our goal is to provide equipping opportunities for everyone to do just that, whether it is through life groups, men's ministry, women's ministry, Pray & Go, and/or Sunday school. We have those and many more chances for you to go deeper and get equipped so that you can engage in the ministry of discipleship that God calls us to. How would your life look if you committed to getting equipped in 2022? Not only would you be different, your family, your place of work, the church, and our community would be transformed if we had an entire church that was equipped for discipleship. Wow, that is exciting to think about, and we hope you dive in and take advantage of all of these wonderful ways to grow.

Lastly, as we look towards the future and watch God's glorious unfolding, He has put something on my heart: a trough. Yes, you read that right, a trough. If we had a trough which we use for baptizing people, then we are showing how being equipped leads to engaging in discipleship and fulfilling the Great Commission. How exciting will it be to see people making a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior? So, my hope and prayer for 2022 is that we *NEED* a trough because people are giving themselves to Christ. Once you start getting equipped and engaging in discipleship, watch out, because God's Glorious Unfolding will continue to unfurl right before us in your life and in the life of the church.

Blessings,

*Pastor Jeff*



## HOW TO... Equip & Engage

### *Find out your Spiritual Gifts - become equipped in your strengths!*

**"What God has called you to do He has gifted you to do, and what He has gifted you to do He has called you to do."**

1. Knowing your spiritual gift helps you understand God's will for your life.
2. Knowing your spiritual gift helps you know what God has not called you to do.
3. Knowing your spiritual gift relieves you from serving out of "duty."
4. Knowing your spiritual gift helps you understand how the Holy Spirit works through you.
5. Knowing your spiritual gift fills a deep inner need or void in your life.
6. Knowing your spiritual gift builds unity among Christians.
7. Knowing your spiritual gift equips you to fulfill God's purpose for your life.
8. Knowing your spiritual gift adds to your self-acceptance.

**"It has been said, 'Career is what you're paid for, but calling is what you're made for.'"**

Source: ChurchGrowth.org

*Find out your Spiritual Gifts at [threetimbers.org](http://threetimbers.org) - click*

**Get Started**

*on the opening page.*



Do you want to make new friends?

Do you want to grow closer to God? Life groups are a great way to do both!

Life groups are for everyone – whether you are single, a couple, or a family. Life groups meet usually twice a month for bible study and fellowship and to "do life together" through all its ups and downs.

Life groups are being formed now on different days and at different times. If you would like to be included, please let Lori Liffing know or email [info@threetimbers.org](mailto:info@threetimbers.org).

It's never too late to join!

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Sunday mornings 9:00 - 9:50 a.m.

at the Ministry Center

**"The Sermon on the Mount" Led by Tim Janiszewski**



### KINGDOM MAN

Tony Evans

Mondays: 7:45 - 9:00 PM

February 28-April 4

Ministry Center

Men's Bible Study



### Soul Sisters

*All women! Please join in the fellowship of Soul Sisters. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm at the Ministry Center.*

*Occasionally, special activities are held instead of or in addition to the book club. Feel free to contact Felicia at [soulsisters@threetimbers.org](mailto:soulsisters@threetimbers.org).*

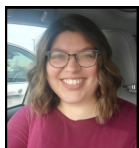
March 1: The Same Kind of Different by Ron Hall & Denver Moore.

April 5: Uninvited by Lysa TerKeurst

Continued next page...



## HOW TO... Equip & Engage (continued)



From Heather, who delivers prayer requests to the prayer chain...

*I know that the world is hurting and battered and bruised. All seems lost and the darkness presses in hard, but the smallest hint of light banishes the darkness and gives hope to all who see.*

*Friends, be the light, and if your light is weakening or going out, the rest of us will be the light for you. Don't give up. Run to the light, to hope, to his outstretched arms. I'll tell you the end of the story: the darkness doesn't win. Hallelujah :)*

To engage as a part of the prayer chain, email Heather at [hlhoefakker.pt@gmail.com](mailto:hlhoefakker.pt@gmail.com)



### Pursuit

Pursuit Middle and High meet every Sunday at the Ministry Center

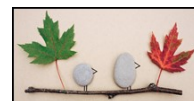
Pursuit Middle 4:30-6:00 pm

Pursuit High – 6:30-8:00 pm

For more info:  
[britney@threetimbers.org](mailto:britney@threetimbers.org)

### Treehouse Kids

All grade school children are welcome to join Mr. Garrett at 6:00 on Wednesday nights for a light dinner. Then at 6:30, lessons will begin and your kids will learn some REALLY COOL ways to study the Bible. To sign your kiddo(s) up, simply contact Mr. Garrett at [garrett@threetimbers.org](mailto:garrett@threetimbers.org)



### Another way to Equip & Engage...

Equip and Engage: a Story of High Hopes  
by Pam Mitchell



One especially hot day last summer I stopped at the public library as I often do. I got out of my car and, because of the heat, I was eager to get inside. But while walking across the parking lot, something caught my eye: An interesting person you might ask? A fender bender? A lovely area of shade? Nope, none of these! While walking across the parking lot, I saw an ant. Yes, an ant. Stay with me now.

Right here I will admit to being at the age where I read large print books whenever possible, so it was pretty amazing that I would spot that little thing ten feet away. A little black spot on a yellow curb. But I did. And this tiny little ant was about to make my day!

Immediately I discovered this was not an ordinary ant . . . it was an ant on a mission. We all know enough about ants to know they often take on spectacular feats, like hauling something ten times their body weight! Unfortunately, this was not a *spectacular feat* moment for this ant.

I walked closer and stood there watching in complete awe while the little bug tried to ascend the five inch curb. With each attempt - and I am talking A+ for perseverance - it would get right up to the top where the curb rolls into the sidewalk, then it would fall. Over and over and over. My mind is playing the old, OLD song *High Hopes* right now. Anybody with me?

Bugs are not really my thing, but I watched the situation and witnessed the sheer determination of that ant, never giving up, and in my mind picturing its family waiting and wondering what was taking so long. I knew I could help and make a difference, waiting family or not. So, on the next attempt, I used my finger to very softly nudge the ant over the hump. Once it reached the sidewalk, there was no *thank you*, no turning back with last looks, just a speedy retreat to a cooler place.

I hope you are smiling as you picture this, but you might also be wondering what this story has to do with being equipped and engaged. As I thought about this story, this is what came to mind: An ant is such an ordinary thing. It goes unnoticed most of the time. In our busy lives, we don't often stop to rescue ants. But our God is a God of the ordinary. He cherishes even the most mundane and ordinary parts of our lives, and he uses ordinary people to accomplish amazing things. He knows when we need help and even when we feel unloved and unnoticed. He shows us when others around us feel that way, too. He says, *Trust me, and I will give you every single thing you need.* Through His Word, He equips us to love others, to help others, and to step up and make a difference. We are equipped to do so, and He calls us to do just that.



I helped that little ant because I knew I could; I just had to make the decision to engage. Pay attention. Be deliberate. God is equipping each of us to use our gifts to engage, even in the most ordinary of circumstances.





## Youth Ministry - Vision 2022

Britney Scheetz [britney@threetimbers.org](mailto:britney@threetimbers.org)



*The youth ministry's goal is that 90% of students are coming back each week because that means they have a desire to be there and that the group is important to them.*

*We are measuring retention, engagement, and growth by the amount of deep questions asked and students talking about God, Bible, or something we learned about.*

*Garrett and I found a summer church camp to send students to; our long term goal is that this will become our home church camp where all of our students will go each summer to build relationships with other campers, encounter Jesus, and of course have fun.*

*I personally got my substitute teaching license to be able to get inside the schools where all of my students spend most of their time. The purpose of this is to build relationships with students that already attend 3TC and spark an interest with students who are not here yet.*

*Outside of youth group, Pursuit is building a community that does life with one another; this looks like hanging out outside of church and youth group, and encouraging one another at school activities. I am rolling out a discipleship model with one student in the high school to go deeper on some biblical topics. This is a six week one-on-one series meant to make disciples who will make disciples. The hope is that this high schooler would then go on to disciple someone else. This is engaging and equipping put into action.*

*This summer is the Mission Trip! It looks a little different than years past. We are going off of the scripture Acts 1:8. Year one we will be going local. Year two we will be somewhere in the state of Nebraska. Year three we will be in the U.S. and Year four we will be out of the country. Then the cycle starts over; if a high schooler goes every year during their high school career, they will have hit all four spots.*



### Upcoming Events:

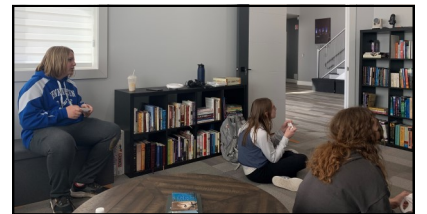
*April 22: Lock In 8pm-7:30am*

*May: End of the Year Party TBA*

*June 3: Bennington Daze Youth Hangs*

*June: Bible studies & park days are kicking off*

*June 13-17: Local Mission Trip*





## Children's Ministry - Vision 2022

Garrett Worner [garrett@threetimbers.org](mailto:garrett@threetimbers.org)



As most of you know, God gave me a vision shortly after accepting the calling to teach at 3tc. This vision concluded in me seeing a multitude of children walking towards Christ. It is this vision that calls at me daily to equip and engage not only our children and the children of this community but the adults who surround them with the love of God.

After Jeff had asked us to put together some ideas on what to plan for in the upcoming years, I came to God in prayer and He laid the number 100 on me... 100 children to come into the fold of Three Timbers Church to begin and continue to know, grow and then go out and show Jesus and His amazing love to everyone around them. 100 kids! That's impossible! Why such a huge number???

And then He reminded me, that it is not me, it is Him!!! "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible," especially for "Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us."

So with this boldness in my heart I ask you all to pray that God shows us how awesome He is and that He will bless Three Timbers Church in the upcoming year and years in bringing 100 children and their families to us... Not just so we grow as a church but so more and more unchurched children will learn, grow in and then want to show the love of our incredible God!!!

### A couple things to get the ball rolling in the upcoming months...

- ♥ Bring a new friend and get a large pizza!

(On both Sunday & Wednesday, any child who brings a new friend will get a large single topping pizza)

- ♥ CEF (Child Evangelical Fellowship)

(Looking to start a once a week program for kids after school to teach kids the gospel.)

- ♥ Easter Program

- ♥ Bennington Daze Parade and float (June 3-5, 2022)

- ♥ Camp Rivercrest (Date(s) to be determined)

- ♥ Friday Night Flix (Date(s) to be determined)



### ENGAGE OPPORTUNITIES!

The nursery is now open on Sunday mornings! Please consider engaging once every six weeks with our little ones!

We're always excited to have help in the Childrens Worship on Sunday mornings and for Treehouse Kids on Wednesday nights! Contact me at [Garrett@threetimbers.org](mailto:Garrett@threetimbers.org)





## Worship & Creative Arts Ministry - Vision 2022

Grant Riesen [grant@threetimbers.org](mailto:grant@threetimbers.org)



The beginning of each year is a great opportunity to set new goals while eagerly looking forward to the days ahead. This is no mystery to any of us, that's why we all set New Year's Resolutions - because without a clear goal, there can be no clear plan of action. For this reason, our church leadership was encouraged to lay out our goals and the vision for each of our ministries that we felt God was leading us towards. For the worship and tech team, I believe that God is calling us towards a handful of goals.

### WORSHIP TEAM

**NEW SONGS** - First, for our worship team, we are going to continue to implement new songs that are theologically sound and that are speaking to the universal church. While we strive to implement these songs and we are always looking for ways to keep the music fresh, our goal is to implement them at a comfortable pace.

Taking this a step further, we have also begun the process of writing original songs as a worship team. This is for two reasons. First: it will provide a creative outlet for the worship team that lets us worship God in a context specific to where we are at in our lives. Secondly: who better understands our church than the members of Three Timbers. As the worship team is a sample size of the congregation, we believe that we will be able to effectively write music that is relevant to the time and place 3TC is currently in.

**FULLY BUILT & ROSTERED TEAM** - Secondly, it is my prayer, **and I strongly ask you to pray about it as well**, that we can have a fully built and rostered worship team by the end of 2022. What does that look like? My vision for the whole worship team structure is shown on the left.



Before I dive into the "why" of this set up, I want to finish laying all the groundwork. If you look at our current team structure you'll note that we traditionally have this:



Meaning we would need to add one more guitarist, one more keyboardist, and a drummer. But if you notice in the title, I said built **AND** rostered. A full roster would be three people deep in each position. So if you take the end goal, minus our current situation, that means we are looking to add: **4 more guitarists, 3 more drummers, 3 more keyboard players, and two more bass players.**

That's all fine and good, but why? Simply put, this arrangement gives us the opportunity to play most any song while maintaining the dynamics the songwriter originally intended, while also keeping the door open for inserting our own team dynamic into the song. The reason we want three people rostered in each spot is so that our worship team members can be scheduled at a rate that allows them to still spend time worshipping in the congregation instead of on stage.

**IEMS & MUSIC STANDS** - We are looking to de-clutter our stage by removing music stands and implementing a new monitoring system. These processes have already begun and should be fully implemented soon. As mentioned above, doing this will de-clutter the stage, will help the team engage more in worship, and will make the lives of our sound team members much easier for mixing the front-of-house.

**MONTHLY TEAM BUILDING** - The worship team and tech team will be replacing one of their weekly rehearsal times with a fellowship evening once a month. This is happening so the team can build deeper relationships with each other and to also give everyone a break from the usual routine. We have tried this a few times now and have had a lot of fun at each.

**EXTERNAL PRESENCE** - Lastly, we will be looking to have more of an external presence in the community through events like Bennington Daze and other community events. This will be done for fellowship and outreach purposes.

### TECH TEAM

**TRANSITION PRESENTATION SOFTWARE** - Over the last two months we have fully transitioned out of our old presentation software (ProPresenter) to a new software (Proclaim). This was done to streamline the presentation creation process, provide presentation software to our whole team, and to lower the barrier to entry onto the tech team.

**NUMERICAL GROWTH** - Just like the worship team, I would like to see our tech team grow in numbers so that our current team can have additional help. For this, I would like to see our Sound Team grow by five and our Presentation Team grow by five. For those of you keeping track at home, that puts us at about eight team members on each team, meaning each volunteer would realistically only have to volunteer once every six weeks or so.

**TRAINING PROGRAM** - I would like to implement training throughout the year that helps to further equip our Tech Team in their understanding and skill set regarding running sound specifically. Running a sound board can be a very intimidating thing and we have some great resources to help our team. These events would happen on scheduled days.

Wrap up on next page...

## Worship & Creative Arts Ministry - Continued...

Grant Riesen [grant@threetimbers.org](mailto:grant@threetimbers.org)

To wrap all of this up, and I know it's a lot, the primary goal of our worship team is the same this year as it was last year: **to help usher in a place of genuine worship through praising our King**. The method of striving towards that goal is ever changing. I know the vision can seem lofty, but I also know that we worship a God who can see it through if it's in his will. I would like to encourage you to pray over a decision to join either our worship team or tech team. If you feel called to do so, please reach out to me. If you want to learn an instrument or improve upon your instrument, please don't hesitate to reach out to me as well. I can make sure we find a time to sit down together and grow together

*To all my current volunteers on the worship and tech teams, I want to thank you for all the hard work you put in week in and week out to make Sunday mornings happen. I say it all the time but I genuinely mean it, I am so blessed to get to lead worship with you all.*

### God is calling you to something.

It may be to the worship team, and it may not be,  
and if it's not, that's okay.

**But whatever it is, I encourage you to dive in.**

It might be scary,  
it might push you,  
you might have some great excuses to avoid it,  
but in the end, you'll be so glad you followed.

"And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"  
Then I said, **"Here I am! Send me."** (Isaiah 6:8, ESV)



AmazonSmile Charity Lists is a meaningful and easy way for you to **shop and donate items directly to charities in need**. Simply find the charities you'd like to support, add items from their lists to your cart, and check out – it's that easy. There is no difference in the price you pay for your purchases!

AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of your eligible Charity List purchases to your selected charity, **at no extra cost to you**

**Support Three Timbers Church by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)**



**UPDATE!**

As of December 2021, the Amazon Smile  
deposit to three timbers church:

**\$1,217.66**

Thank you for choosing 3tc!



Have you **moved**?

Do you have a **new phone number**?

Have you opened a **new email account**?

Are you **new to 3tc**?

So we can keep you up to date, please keep us up to date!

**Let us know if you've had changes to your contact information:**  
**[rick@threetimbers.org](mailto:rick@threetimbers.org) and [newsletter@threetimbers.org](mailto:newsletter@threetimbers.org)**

**Stay Connected...**



## Financial Corner - Vision 2022

*Rick Blunk, Business Manager*



As was shared on Vision Sunday, the forecast for 2022 is for a deficit of \$26,000. Thankfully we have momentum to build on and this is a gap which can realistically be closed. This \$26,000 figure represents about 10% of our budget, so through maintaining our momentum enjoyed the second half of 2021 and especially December, coupled with some combination of an increase in giving as well as continually searching for cost savings, we can work together to close this gap!

We have been blessed to have several individuals in the second half of 2021 join us in supporting Three Timbers financially which is a true blessing and very exciting. As was shared on Vision Sunday, we are fortunate to have solid reserves as the result of several years of surplus prior to the Covid disruption. To achieve the 10% improvement will most likely come from the following:

- ⇒ Praying God continues to bring individuals to Three Timbers who desire to grow in their faith as we Equip and Engage. As a part of living our faith, we pray individuals will feel called to return a portion of what God has entrusted them with to His service. We are only stewards, not owners, of our finances!
- ⇒ Pray the circumstances of those who currently do not give to Three Timbers will change, allowing them to support the church financially.
- ⇒ Encourage members to consider automating their giving through the PayPal option or a check directly from their bank mailed to the church. When life throws all of us that inevitable curve and it disrupts our attendance, giving tends to be disrupted as well. The church's expenses continue, of course.
- ⇒ Continue to search for cost-saving opportunities. Expenses are generally flat over the years as we have been blessed to take advantage of opportunities to control costs while recognizing most of our expenses are fixed in nature: rent, utilities, insurance, payroll, etc.

It takes financial resources for Three Timbers to Equip and Engage. We are very thankful for the many who joyfully support Three Timbers ministry efforts in northwest Omaha.

God Bless

*Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,  
for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.*

- Hebrews 13:16 ESV







## Equip & Engage - My Story

by Kristen Foster

I grew up in the church going to Sunday service, Sunday school, youth group, etc. It was never forced on me, but always there as I wanted it or needed it. I invited God into my heart at a youth retreat in Branson, MO while Mercy Me sang "I Can Only Imagine." I still love that song to this day.



I have been a member of many different Christian denominations. The important things for me are community and message. Is the message applicable to my everyday life, and do people truly care about me as an individual? My faith has been tested in the past, but never as much as in 2019/2020.

When I first started going through a divorce, I didn't want people in the church to know. I was ashamed, broken and felt like I failed. I know divorce isn't right with God and it isn't something that is talked about in the church. I wanted to hide. It is still difficult to talk about. Many times over the years, I have said the words "why does God do this?" That question was going through my mind once again. I became distant from God and distant from the church during this time. I used COVID as an excuse not to show up. I became frustrated and felt like things were being done to me instead of for me through God. At one point, I began to wonder if what I believed in my whole life was real.

The job I loved and worked so hard for wasn't being flexible with what I needed for my family. The legal system is not at all what I thought it was in America. I had many days where I didn't want to get out of bed, didn't want to do something as simple as showering, didn't want to wake up. I received help for my children. They deserved to still have their mother present. I forced myself to get out of the house, to see people. I felt like there was a hole in my life. Like I was just going through the motions and waiting for the next day to happen.

I chose to come back to church one Sunday. I'm still not quite sure why I made that decision. I had someone ask me to coffee and for some reason I went. She gave me a daily devotional that I held onto for a couple months before cracking it open. I was angry with God, feeling abandoned. When I opened it for the first time, I cried after reading the passage. I cried every day that week knowing that my heart longed for something more. Something bigger than me. I asked God that if He was real, if He would change my life. If He would help me find the joy that was still left, if He would guide me to where I should be.

It took about a year when I had an opportunity to interview for a new position within the hospital where I worked. I prayed that God would give me the position. I wanted out of where I was and I wanted out on my terms... NOW. I was anxious, grasping for anything different. When I got an email a week later saying they went a different direction, it was a blow to my ego. I didn't understand. I had to take a hard look in the mirror.

I was trying to guide my life and not allow God to place me where I should be. I put my head down and worked harder at work, worked harder at home, and worked harder for my kids. Within a short amount of time, I had someone approach me about a position that had recently opened up. They encouraged me to apply for the position. I took some time and prayed about it. I have heard about people hearing God speak to them and I never knew what it meant until now. I spent time in silence with God. I read His word. I waited. I felt a tug on my heart to go through another interview process, if nothing else but for the experience. I struggled some days, but always went back to time with God during this process. I felt a peace I hadn't felt in a while. I felt like I was finally on the right path. I received the job offer and accepted it. It has allowed me to have more time for fellowship with God, more time with people who matter to me and with my kids. I know that God was guiding me, I just had to take the time to listen.



## Equip & Engage - Men's Ministry



### Saturday with Ron Brown

by Marshall Peterson



*"Our God is a great God who was truly in control of the whole event."*

What an amazing morning. Ron Brown is an incredible motivational speaker. God's hands were all over the morning. It was God who brought Ron to us, it was God who put it on the heart of someone to donate a catered breakfast from HyVee and for another to donate door prizes. It was by God's hand that brought the more than 60 men to the Stumble Inn. It was by God's hand that there was a man there from the Open Door Mission who was more than happy to take all the unused food, milk, and juice. While it was the Men's Ministry Team that planned the event, we were just following where God was leading us.

Ron Brown is one of the best speakers I have ever had the privilege to listen to. He can really fire up a room full of men. He spoke for over 30 minutes but it felt like it was only 5 minutes. He spoke about how we are not the "Home Team" here on Earth. As the visitors, the home team is not making us comfortable. They are focused on us before, during, and after we even get on the field. Ron shared many examples from his life how the Home Team made his life uncomfortable from poor condition locker rooms to being booed as soon as he arrived at the game.

He encouraged us to be like the flagpoles around the top of the stadium and not the flags. The flagpoles are firm in their position while the flags are blown in whatever direction the wind is blowing. We were challenged to stand strong against the winds of society. Ron is a humble man who was happy to talk to anyone and everyone. He was one of the last people to leave the event. It was a great morning.



## MEN'S RETREAT

May 13-14

Camp Rivercrest

\$50/person (all inclusive)

If you have a son who is middle school age or older, consider bringing them too!





## Missions... global



*The Healing Kadi Foundation is a Christian faith-centered organization that works with the people of South Sudan to provide sustainable high quality healthcare, education for local healthcare providers, and psychological and spiritual counseling.*

*A message from Dr. Chuck Tomek, regarding his recent trip with the HKF team to South Sudan...*



### A PRESCRIPTION FOR HOPE

I'm currently flying from Entebbe, Uganda, to Brussels, Belgium, the first leg of our long trip home from our mission work in South Sudan. The stewardess walked down the aisle with her cart, asking if the passengers wanted a chicken or fish entree. I chose chicken.

I opened the meal and was disappointed at its meager size. We had been eating rice, plantain, potatoes, and mango the past two weeks. I was hoping for a man sized meal.

I then reflected on many of the hundreds of patients I had cared for during the trip and thought how excited they would have been to have been offered a "meager" meal such as this.

I would go to the clinic at 6:30 every morning to drink coffee, although we didn't see patients until 8. Patients would inevitably be lined up already. "How far had they walked?" I wondered. "Should I share my breakfast with them?" I was hesitant to even glance at them, fearing their stare would guilt me into opening the clinic for business before our regular help arrived.

Once the clinic started, patients would come into my examination room, one by one. They often looked so forlorn, sad, and down trodden. Remember, the patients we saw this time had just returned to their war torn country from the refugee camp in Uganda, having been gone at least four years. Most came home to nothing, as their homes had been destroyed, their livestock killed, and were starting their lives all over. I would take their hand, say "Do pure, gown ada," (Good morning, how are you, in Bari) and they would immediately smile and suddenly become almost vibrant. They didn't come to our clinic asking for a miracle. Their medical requests were for the most part uncomplicated. They simply wanted to know someone cared for them, and would continue to be available for help. Often they were too poor to have shoes, and many wore the only clothes they owned. Most were infected with parasites and/or scabies.

My wife and I would go for long walks every evening into the bush, and out of seemingly nowhere we would meet South Sudanese along the same path, many we had examined that day. We could not see huts in any direction as far as the eye could see. "Where do they live, where did they come from?" we would ask ourselves. And once again, they would smile brightly, apparently happy to see us away from the clinic.

Our trip to South Sudan, in my opinion, gave these people so much hope. So many are fearful the war will break out again, and could do so at any time. When they saw we were willing to come to the clinic, live amongst them, and go trekking into the jungle in the evenings, they believed things would be OK. Oftentimes when people are in the deepest valleys in life, the most precious gift you can provide is hope and I am so very thankful to our Lord that we could offer that.

In this world, so often the rich, famous, and powerful are looked upon as "first", while the poor are often ignored, looked down upon and considered as "last." But in the kingdom of heaven, it's the opposite. Proverbs 9:30 says, "But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first." This is God's powerful upside down kingdom. I have no doubt our God loving, God fearing brothers and sisters in South Sudan are "first" in the eyes of our Lord and Savior.

I said a prayer before eating my chicken entree, asking the Lord to accept my apology for being upset I'd been offered so little to eat. Thank goodness Christ still loves those of us who are so slow to learn.

Thank you for continuing to support our work in South Sudan with your financial assistance and your prayers. We'll continue to dispense and fill countless prescriptions for medicine, but more importantly, every patient will get a prescription for hope.

In God's Love, *Chuck*







## Missions... global (continued)

### Samaritan's Purse Celebrate God's Faithfulness!



God did remarkable things around the world through Operation Christmas Child in 2021! There were many obstacles and challenges, but He was faithful and prepared the way for Samaritan's Purse to take shoebox gifts and the Gospel of Jesus Christ to children in more than 100 countries and territories.

"Every shoebox represents an opportunity to reach one more child with the Gospel of Jesus Christ." —Franklin Graham

*As you may remember, 3tc's "assembly night" at the ministry center resulted in approximately 100 shoeboxes being prepared and prayed over before being shipped to Samaritan's Purse.*



## Missions... local



While Pray & Go is on hiatus during the winter months, please continue to pray for this local mission opportunity. Pray & Go is an opportunity that allows us to cover our community in prayer. Reach out to Van Wrenn or Ginger Blunk to sign up. And don't forget: this is NOT a door-to-door talking campaign; it's a walking-and-praying campaign! It's a great way to enjoy God's creation while serving your community!

Kudos to our youth and their sponsors for participating last fall!

### How to Pray & Go????

- 1) Download the Encounter Outreach app for 3tc - details online at [threetimbers.org](http://threetimbers.org);
- 2) Grab a pack of 25 (or more!) door hangers from church or from the ministry center;
- 3) Open the app and chose a street. As you walk down the street, pray for the occupants of the homes. Leave a door hanger on their door to let them know they're being prayed for;
- 4) Touch the house on the app to show it's been prayed for (if you visit with them, touch 'engage').



Since Pray & Go is on a short hiatus due to the cold, now is a great time to get caught up on the Life, Interrupted podcasts! Check out the variety of conversations and Bible studies with regard to experiences of God being in the midst of these interruptions. Members of the Three Timbers staff alongside various guests talk about God's tendency to interrupt lives, both throughout the Bible and still today.

Listen anywhere you get your podcasts (Apple Podcasts, Spotify, etc.).

Episodes are also archived at [www.threetimbers.org/life-interrupted-podcast-2/](http://www.threetimbers.org/life-interrupted-podcast-2/)

*Equip & Engage others by recommending the Life, Interrupted Podcasts.*

3tc supports the **Bennington Community Foundation** in a variety of ways:

- ♦ by providing broadcast space for the **Bennington Gives!** campaign;
- ♦ by hosting **Soup-er Bowl Sunday** canned soup drive to benefit the Bennington Food Bank;
- ♦ by participating in the Bennington Daze Parade and activities.





## Engage...



### **Ridgewood Senior Living - Monthly Worship**

What: Worship, Sing, Pray, Fellowship

When: Third Sunday of the Month - 3:00 -4:00 p.m.

Where: Ridgewood Senior Living, 12301 N 149th Circle, Bennington



**Families welcome... Worship with and interact with others and be blessed.**

How others are engaging... With apologies, this won't be a complete list and all names won't be included, but here are ways some are engaging and also ideas to be considered...

**Online Greeter** - Heidi's warm welcome to the online community for Sunday services provides scripture and song lyrics for a more inclusive worship experience.

**Set-up/Take-down Team** - Headed by Boris, this team faithfully prepares indoor and outdoor spaces for Sunday worship and then reverses the process afterwards. (See Boris to find out how you can join.)

**In-Person Greeters** - Pastor Jeff outside & many volunteers inside welcome all to worship. (See Pastor Jeff to join.)

**Prayer Chain Facilitator** - Heather recently accepted the position to replace Pam, whose faithful service strengthened the chain and comforted many. Heather's willingness to step into the role has provided a seamless transition and continued blessings to all who request prayers and those who readily pray for others.

**Treehouse Kids and Pursuit Helpers** - Assistance from these volunteers help our tireless youth ministers with a variety of services... additional helpers are welcome to join the teams on Sundays and/or Wednesdays! (See Britney for Pursuit opportunities and Mr. Garrett for Treehouse Kids/Branches opportunities.)

**Nursery Helpers** - This reactivated program has been blessed with several caring hearts, but more assistance is desired as it gains momentum to provide childcare for babies and preschoolers during worship.

**Tech Team** - Under the direction of Grant, the Sound Team & Presentation Team are an integral part of Sunday worship. (See Grant's goals for 2022 & contact him to join the team!)

**Life Groups** - Coordinated by Lori, Life Groups meet on a variety of days and times to "do life together" and grow in countless ways. See more information in the Life Group article.

**Communion Set-up** - Set up the communion table & set out elements on each chair on the second Sunday of the month.

**Music Ministry** - Providing moving and uplifting music to further the worship experience (See Grant's goals for more.)

**Newsletter Contributor** - Provide articles and/or pictures (Do so at [newsletter@threetimbers.org](mailto:newsletter@threetimbers.org))

**Project Chair &/or Assistant** - Friday Night Flix, Bennington Daze Parade, Trunk or Treat, and many other opportunities await your help! Engage in one or all! (Contact [info@threetimbers.org](mailto:info@threetimbers.org) for details.)

**Ministry Partners** - Plug in with Healing Kadi Foundation, Samaritan's Purse, or the Bennington Community Foundation with your prayers and support.

Where are you being called? Think about it. Pray about it. Take the Spiritual Gifts Inventory, watch (or re-watch) the Vision Sunday video for inspiration, and to see where God is calling you.

*"God does not call the equipped, He equips the called."*



## Equipped & Engaged...



### Congratulations, Josh Hoins!

(Shared with permission from Josh & his appropriately proud mom, Kristy, who posted the following on Facebook.)

When he told Tim & I he was going to run for President of his fraternity, Delta Tau Delta, the same chapter Tim was in, we weren't at all surprised. Like his dad, when Josh commits to something, he's all in.

When he told me he was running for a second term, I was skeptical. Not because Josh wouldn't rise to the occasion, but he has had so much turmoil this past year, I didn't want the pressure of leading 71 men to overwhelm him.

Last night, Josh was recognized for his vision of what fraternity life should be. Josh is President of the Year out of 23 chapters in UNL's division. The Beta Tau chapter received a Court of Honor gavel given to the top 20 chapters, the Hugh Shields Award for chapter excellence which is given to the top 10 chapters in the nation, and these men have the distinct privilege of being #1 in the country. 🏆 🏆 ! Thank you Tim for instilling the desire to serve others to all our sons. ❤️  
Congratulations Josh



Spotlight  
Good News  
Ministries

Three Timbers Church is blessed to have Tim and Juli Janiszewski in our congregation. Tim has preached at 3tc on Sunday mornings, he and Juli are members of a Life Group, and Tim is the Adult Sunday School teacher for the Sermon on the Mount study. But many people don't know that Tim is also the Founding Director of **Spotlight Good News Ministries**. We're excited to share this great program and encourage everyone to tune in or log on to learn how he has engaged to share good news to all.

### Our Purpose

We love to hear Good News that makes life worth living.  
The message of Jesus Christ is the Good News of God to us.  
This Good News is for sharing—always—but particularly in bad news times like ours.  
We spotlight the Good News to people who've not heard or received it.  
We shine light on the Good News for people who already have heard and embraced it.



Visit the SGNM website to see the many resources available:  
[www.spotlightgoodnews.com](http://www.spotlightgoodnews.com)

Find SGNM on the air every weekday at AM 660 KCRO  
5:30am, 9:45am, and 10:15pm.

Tune in to listen Monday through Friday  
to hear good news stories and find out  
how you can make a difference.

The broadcasts and studies are also available on  
Facebook and YouTube

Among the many people interviewed on a variety of  
topics, here's a few names you might recognize:

Jeff Ryan  
Grant Riesen  
Stephanie Olson

Chuck Tomek  
Bill Bowers  
Anton Reginald

*Our motto: Live to Serve; Learn to Live!*





## Equipped & Engaged...

*Thank you to Dr. Chuck Tomek for sharing this moving experience from a recent trip to Greece.*

### COME LORD JESUS, PLEASE COME

Last October my wife and I took a trip to Greece. We hired a local tour guide to drive us to Corinth and explain the biblical history of this most amazing place.

Towards the end of the day he pulled the car over alongside a body of water in a village called Kechries. "I'm going to drop you off here," he began. "In biblical times, this town was called Cenchrea. This shore is where apostle Paul left Greece and set sail for Syria. It's explained in Acts 18:18 if you have any doubt. As Christians, I feel you need to experience this place." He then drove away.

Immediately we knew we were on holy ground. Deb and I were the only ones there, and we sat about 100 feet apart. You could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and the first and only thing that came to our minds was to bow our heads and pray. And pray we did, thanking our Lord for His love and mercy. I looked over at Deb and saw her crying uncontrollably as she was overcome by what we felt. I then looked out over Kechries Bay and a most beautiful and amazing rainbow had formed. We were left speechless. Eventually I scooped up some rocks and put them in my backpack, knowing at one time Apostle Paul walked close by.

I often reflect on this day and ask the Holy Spirit to give me that peaceful feeling again. I know it will happen when our Lord returns.

One of the earliest recorded prayers of the church is the Aramaic word Maranatha, which means, "Come Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:20).

During these stressful times, we wait and want, looking and longing for Christ to once again come into our lives and this world. Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.

I think of places in this world that so desperately need your love and comfort. Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.

I think of my church family and the stress they are undergoing with jobs, inflation, and COVID. Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.

I think of those who so badly need the love of Christ today. Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.

I focus on my own heart, and become aware of my sinful thoughts, words, and deeds, and acknowledge them before you. Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.

Christ comes to us in three different ways. Firstly, in Bethlehem at Christmas, secondly, at the end of the age, and thirdly, in the lives of believers every day.

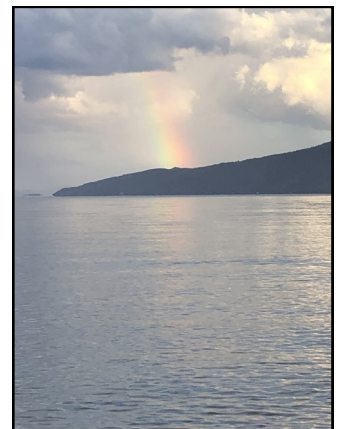
I don't have the words to describe exactly what I felt along that shoreline in Greece. I just know I was overtaken by the Holy Spirit and I want that feeling again. I want the Lord to come.

My prayer is that likewise, you want and experience Maranatha in 2022.

In Christ's Love,

*Chuck*

*The rainbow in Greece.*



*As you finish with your newsletter, consider sharing it with a neighbor or friend.*



Three Timbers Church

P.O. Box 282

Bennington NE 68007

*When finished with your newsletter, please consider sharing it with someone else!*